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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN INVESTIGATING BELLVIEW CRASH

Ref: Abuja 2039

1. (U) This is an action cable. Please see paragraph 3.

2. (U) On October 25, 2005, post received the following letter from President Olusegun Obasanjo. The text of the letter is as follows:

Dear Ambassador:

Re: Crash of Nigerian Bellview Airline

On Saturday, 23rd October 2005, Bellview Airline Flight 210 from Lagos to Abuja with 117 passengers on board crashed in Lisa, Ogun State, a few minutes after take-off. The plane was a Boeing 737-400. The last radio contact with the plane was 3 minutes after take-off. It crashed in the forest in Lisa 7 1/2 nautical miles, north-east of the airport and much of the plane disintegrated. The cause of the crash is not known.

Given that we are not sure of the cause of the crash, and investigation may require additional sophisticated equipment, we would like to request that the United States FAA and Boeing Corporation assist us with the investigation. The Director-General, Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority, had earlier written in this regards. We look forward to this cooperation.

Let me end finally by sending my condolences to the families of the U.S citizens who lost their lives in the flight. It has been a shock and a national tragedy for us all.

Yours Sincerely,
Olusegun Obasanjo

3. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: The NTSB/Boeing team is on the way and should arrive on October 27, 2005. In addition, post requests specific assistance with the recovery and identification of remains, given the urgent need to make a confirmed identification of the remains of Office of Defense Cooperation Chief Major Joseph Haydon.
CAMPBELL